

IEIP Brief

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A Quarterly Update on Activities at the International Emerging Infections Program, Thailand

IEIP is now live! NCID/OD graphic specialist Curtis Hendrickson designed an IEIP web site (<http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/global/ieip/>). Although the site only has information on IEIP-Thailand, it has been designed so that Kenya and other IEIP countries can easily be added in the future. The site describes the IEIP in general and gives highlights of the main activities in Thailand. It also posts copies of abstracts and old newsletters, as well as contact information, maps, and useful links.

Surveillance

NCID/OD computer programmers Kwasi Agyeman and Charles Miller have designed an Access database for entry of surveillance data at the hospitals in Sakaeo. The program will be pilot tested in the field in December 2002. The longer-term goal is to make this an Internet-based system with electronic relay of information to a central site. These CDC computer support activities are being coordinated with other computer assistance requests from the Thai MOPH to EPO and GAP.

IEIP is delighted to welcome Channawong Burapat, M.S.W., as the new Surveillance Coordinator in Sakaeo. Her role is critical to provide supervision and guidance of daily surveillance activities.

Outbreak Response

IEIP is continuing to facilitate reference testing for specimens at the U.S. CDC. To date, IEIP has not been involved in field investigations.

Research

IEIP has developed a protocol to study the etiology of respiratory infections in Sakaeo province, eastern Thailand. Beginning March 2003, this study will collect nasopharyngeal swabs and serum specimens from all consenting pneumonia inpatients identified by the recently established surveillance system. A sample of outpatients who meet the case definition for influenza-like illness (ILI) will also be included in the study. Viral cell culture, RT-PCR and rapid antigen influenza testing will be conducted to examine the contribution of parainfluenza viruses, adenoviruses, respiratory syncytial virus, influenza virus, and human metapneumovirus to pneumonia and ILI in Thailand. Specimens will also be tested to determine the antimicrobial susceptibility and serotype distribution of *Haemophilus influenzae* and *Streptococcus pneumoniae*. The primary investigators are Malinee Chittganpitch, M.S., Influenza Virologist at the Thai National Institute of Health and Mark Simmerman, M.S., Assistant Director of Operations, IEIP-Thailand.



IEIP staff member Thammanoon Saewanee demonstrates his commitment to protecting Thai and U.S. citizens against emerging infectious disease threats

Training

Chris Kenedi, a Hubert Student Fellow in International Health, spent 7 weeks helping to develop a project to test for Nipah virus in banked cerebrospinal fluid samples from patients hospitalized with encephalitis in Southern Thailand.

In November, IEIP sponsored Dr. Yaowapa Pongsuwanna of the Thai National Institute of Health to travel to CDC for additional training with Dr. Mark Pallansch in enterovirus diagnostic techniques, with a focus on characterizing EV71 isolates from Thailand.

Also in November, Dr. Jirapat Kanlayanaphotporn, Bureau of Epidemiology, presented an abstract from IEIP-Thailand at the 2002 Joint International Tropical Medicine Meeting in Bangkok. The paper was an evaluation of the existing passive pneumonia surveillance system in Sakaeo that is critical for future comparison to the new active system.